

WORKFORCE OBSERVATIONS FOR SOUTH CENTRAL WISCONSIN COUNTIES

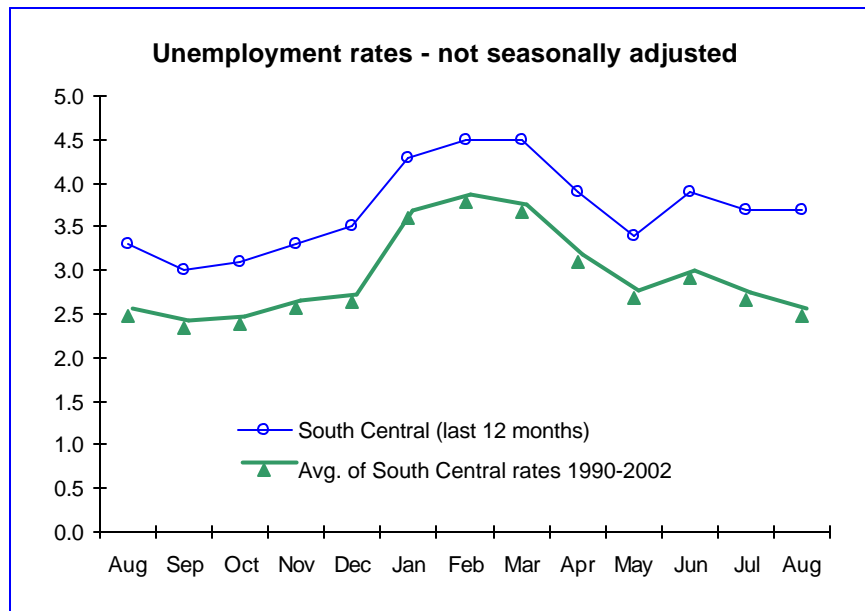
September 2003



State of Wisconsin
Department of Workforce Development

Moderate job growth, high unemployment rates send mixed signals

Instead of falling, as it typically does in August, **Columbia County's** unemployment rate rose 0.2 percent, to exceed any August rate recorded between 1990 and 2002. Employment-by-industry estimates (on page 2) suggest that most sectors either maintained about the same number of jobs as they had in July or added a few jobs. The decline in construction employment does not seem unusual for August, but the manufacturing sector failed to add enough jobs over the summer to compensate for losses that occurred last September through February. Each month of 2003 has seen fewer manufacturing jobs than the same month of 2002. If manufacturing employment thins as it typically does this winter, it may take longer than expected to reach pre-recession levels.



Between 1990 and the present, no other August has reported such a high rate. Job losses in construction and leisure & hospitality aren't necessarily expected in August, but neither the timing nor the magnitude of these declines explains the high August unemployment rate. Whether comparing number of jobs added or proportional growth, either

from July to August or from last August to this August, manufacturing and retail trade posted strong growth. Despite modest monthly growth in August, professional & business services remains well ahead of last year's employment figures, as does financial activities. The information sector and transportation, warehousing & utilities seem to hold their ground without large gains or losses.

Compared to the state (5.4 percent) or the nation (6.0 percent), **Dane County** still enjoys a very low unemployment rate, but it held steady in July and August, two months that usually bring important unemployment rate declines.

In **Dodge County**, the unemployment rate typically falls about half a percent in August. This August it rose full percent to 7.0 percent, a higher August rate than any in at least thirteen years. The manufacturing sector remains over 400

Labor force estimates - not seasonally adjusted

	Wisconsin			South Central			Columbia			Dane		
	Aug 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Aug 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Aug 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Aug 2003	1-month change	1-year change
Civilian Labor Force**	3,129,400	-38,630	74,000	465,100	-2,930	18,700	30,100	130	1,300	294,400	-2,660	12,600
Employed	2,959,600	-32,640	59,100	447,800	-2,870	16,000	28,400	80	1,010	286,100	-2,300	11,600
Unemployed	169,700	-5,990	14,900	17,300	-60	2,700	1,670	60	290	8,400	-370	1,020
Unemployment rate (%)	5.4	-0.1	0.3	3.7	0.0	0.4	5.6	0.2	0.8	2.9	0.0	0.3

	Dodge			Jefferson			Marquette			Sauk		
	Aug 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Aug 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Aug 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Aug 2003	1-month change	1-year change
Civilian Labor Force**	48,700	640	1,850	43,200	-840	630	7,800	-80	320	40,800	-120	2,000
Employed	45,300	110	780	41,200	-720	460	7,400	20	260	39,400	-60	1,930
Unemployed	3,400	530	1,070	1,960	-120	170	470	-100	60	1,390	-60	100
Unemployment rate (%)	7.0	1.0	2.0	4.5	-0.2	0.3	6.0	-1.3	0.5	3.4	-0.1	0.1

** Includes labor force participants residing in area. Estimates are NOT seasonally adjusted. Current month estimates are preliminary. Numbers 2,000 and greater are rounded to nearest 100. Numbers under 2,000 are rounded to nearest 10. Sub-units may not add to totals due to rounding.

Calculations are based on unrounded numbers. Results are rounded. For more information call (608) 242-4885 or email dan.barroilhet@dwd.state.wi.us.

jobs below its 2002 level. August's sharp increase in manufacturing employment narrowed the gap between this year's manufacturing employment estimate and last year's. The gap has been steady enough for most of spring and summer that it will take more than one month to establish a change in the trend. Retail & wholesale trade has posted fewer jobs for each month of 2003 than for the same month of 2002, but the gap between last year's figures and this year's figures appears to be shrinking. Education & health services and leisure & hospitality both grew in August and have both posted higher figures for each month of 2003 than the same month of 2002.

Jefferson County saw its unemployment rate fall in August, but not as fast as it usually does, so the gap between the current rate and the typical rate grew for the third straight month. The August rate has not been this high since 1992. In information, professional, business & other services, the gap between last year's job figures and this year's nearly doubled in May and held almost steady in June, so it is somewhat reassuring to see the deficit shrink in July and August. Retail & wholesale trade continues to post more jobs each month of this year than the same month last year, and the margin of gain looks healthy. Transportation, warehousing & utilities is further below last year's figures than it has been at any point this year. Leisure & hospitality added jobs in August and remained well ahead of last year's figures. Manufacturing, which usually adds jobs over the summer months, saw small employment increases in April and in June, but not nearly enough to make up for job losses twelve out the last nineteen months.

Uniquely among South Central Wisconsin counties, **Marquette County** experienced a sharper unemployment rate decline than it usually does in August and was closer to typical rates in August than in July. Nonetheless, the rate remains about 1.5 percent above the typical and higher than any August rate reported since at least 1990. August and September unemployment rates are usually the lowest of the year, so the labor force figures are not altogether encouraging. Employment-by-industry estimates present a somewhat milder picture. If not booming, manufacturing employment seems to hold ground well above last year's figures. Information, professional, business & other services continues to hover 20 to 40 jobs below last year's level, as it has for all of this year, while leisure & hospitality is following last year's trends fairly closely if softly.

Sauk County was just 0.2 percent above its typical unemployment rate, much closer than any other South Central Wisconsin county. Sauk County's current rate is lower than August rates from 1990 to 1993. Leisure & hospitality employment seems to have peaked in July and remains well ahead of last year's figures. Education & health services saw modest job growth in August and was the only non-government sector (besides leisure & hospitality) to post more than 1 percent more jobs this August than last August. Despite August job growth, retail & wholesale trade and information, professional, business & other services both remain well below last year's figures, as they have been for all of 2003. August was the first month of 2003 that saw more manufacturing jobs than 2002, and the margin is slim. Stronger this summer than last, growth nearly compensates for last April's sharp drop.

Employment by industry estimates - not seasonally adjusted

	Wisconsin			South Central			Columbia			Dane		
	Aug 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Aug 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Aug 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Aug 2003	1-month change	1-year change
Total jobs, all industries*	2,795,100	-5,400	1,000	439,500	2,500	8,200	22,400	350	350	303,500	1,500	7,300
Const., min'g & nat. resources	131,800	0	-8,200	23,500	80	-140	1,260	-20	50	15,900	100	-200
Manufacturing	521,000	2,100	-15,200	63,000	1,310	260	5,000	40	-160	30,000	700	1,800
Trade (wholesale & retail)	442,200	1,900	9,300	64,200	990	1,670	3,400	40	-80	43,600	900	2,100
Transport, Wrhsing, Utilities	102,500	-1,200	-1,100	11,500	30	230	810	30	40	7,700	200	1,600
Financial activities	159,300	-100	5,200	29,800	200	1,380	600	0	40	26,100	200	1,400
Education & health services	363,300	-200	6,400	44,000	180	1,640	2,500	40	60	29,200	100	1,300
Leisure & hospitality	260,500	-1,100	-100	45,900	-320	3,200	2,900	0	410	24,500	-200	-100
Info, prof, bus. & other srvc	439,400	-1,000	9,300	69,000	440	1,100	2,200	10	0	56,100	300	2,100
Government	375,100	-5,800	-4,600	88,500	-450	-1,200	3,600	190	0	70,400	-600	-1,300

	Dodge			Jefferson			Marquette			Sauk		
	Aug 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Aug 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Aug 2003	1-month change	1-year change	Aug 2003	1-month change	1-year change
Total jobs, all industries*	34,000	430	-10	35,600	-230	-720	4,000	10	80	40,100	390	1,160
Const., min'g & nat. resources	2,400	-30	20	1,400	0	60	270	0	0	2,200	20	-60
Manufacturing	10,700	370	-430	9,200	-20	-1,020	1,300	10	60	6,700	200	10
Trade (wholesale & retail)	3,900	50	-30	6,500	-50	290	510	10	20	6,300	40	-630
Transport, Wrhsing, Utilities	970	10	30	1,170	-10	-50	60	0	0	830	0	10
Financial activities	720	0	-30	960	0	20	120	0	0	1,300	0	-60
Education & health services	4,300	10	270	4,500	0	-20	290	0	-10	3,300	20	40
Leisure & hospitality	2,900	70	250	3,500	30	240	530	0	0	11,500	-220	2,400
Info, prof, bus. & other srvc	2,900	20	-260	4,700	80	-30	230	-10	-40	2,900	40	-670
Government	5,100	-70	160	3,600	-260	-220	680	10	40	5,100	280	110

*Includes jobs with employers in area. Estimates are NOT seasonally adjusted. Current month estimates are preliminary.

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